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SUBJECT: MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ICMC PROGRAMS FOR  
VULNERABLE IRAQIS IN JORDAN AND LEBANON

REF: A. A) EXUM/KANESHIRO E-MAIL 06/27/05

[B](#). B) 03 AMMAN 1587

[1](#)1. (U) Following is a monitoring and evaluation report for PRM cooperative agreements SPRMC004CA150 and SPRMC004CA140 with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), designed to secure medical care, primary and non-formal/vocational education and basic humanitarian aid for extremely vulnerable Iraqis (EVIs) residing in Jordan and Lebanon under UNHCR's temporary protection regime. These agreements, totaling USD 935,518 for Jordan-based activities and USD 516,515 for Lebanon, maintain PRM-funded programs that ICMC has been implementing in partnership with Caritas International's Migrants Center in Lebanon and Caritas' National Association in Jordan since September 2002.

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SOURCES  
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[1](#)2. (U) Amman-based regional refcoord reviewed implementation of these two EVI programs with ICMC's Jordan and Lebanon representatives, senior Caritas managers and local-hire EVI project officers three times each between September 2004 and July 2005:

-- Accompanied by PRM/ANE's visiting Iraq Program Officer, refcoord met ICMC Jordan Representative Suzana Paklar on February 28 at offices ICMC/Caritas Jordan specifically established in downtown Amman to house its EVI program.

-- Refcoord also met Paklar and ICMC Lebanon Representative/overall ICMC EVI Program Coordinator Jim Kelly jointly in Amman on April 28.

-- Finally, refcoord met Kelly, EVI Lebanon Project Officer Isabelle Saade and Najla Tabet Chahda, the Director of the Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center on June 24. (The Center, established in Beirut in 1994, now houses the EVI program.)

[1](#)3. (U) In addition to these meetings, refcoord observed EVI project caseworkers screening prospective beneficiaries at ICMC/Caritas offices, and reviewed EVI project databases, in Amman on March 20 and in Lebanon June 24. She also accompanied ICMC/Caritas Jordan caseworker Gaby Daw on eight home visits to beneficiaries living in seven different neighborhoods in Amman on March 20, and also observed three home visits that ICMC/Caritas Lebanon EVI Project Officer Saade and caseworker Mirelle Chekrallah made to existing and prospective beneficiaries living in the Fanar District of Beirut on June 24. Because security conditions prohibit refcoord from accompanying caseworkers to West Beirut neighborhoods, ICMC/Caritas caseworkers Laurette Challita and Majida El Joubeily videotaped three beneficiary families living inside an UNRWA-run camp for Palestinian refugees and surrounding West Beirut neighborhoods in June. (NOTE: This video, along with EVI project data, has been pouched to PRM/ANE, per ref A instructions. END NOTE.) Refcoord also discussed how ICMC's EVI programming complements UNHCR aid with UNHCR's Acting Jordan Head of Mission James Lynch and UNHCR's Senior Regional Durable Solutions Officer for Lebanon, Mohammed Hantosh, July 5.

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OVERALL OPERATING ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE  
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[1](#)4. (SBU) Cooperative agreements SPRMC004CA150 and SPRMC004CA140 call for ICMC to identify and assist the most vulnerable Iraqi asylum seekers in Jordan and Lebanon -- a population that UNHCR, government sources and NGOs currently estimate to number between 300,000-400,000 in Jordan and 20,000-25,000 in Lebanon. Although UNHCR placed all new Iraqi asylum seekers under a temporary protection (TP) regime in March 2003, comparatively few have registered for TP status (15,000 in Jordan and 1,000 in Lebanon) due to the limited assistance UNHCR's community service units in Amman and Beirut can offer (see para. 9) and pervasive fears that registering with UNHCR will actually facilitate deportation. (COMMENT: These concerns may be credible in Lebanon as UNHCR's September 2003 MOU with the GOL permits Lebanese

authorities to access UNHCR case files. END COMMENT.)

15. (SBU) ICMC/Caritas' target caseload continued to face serious protection issues as a result of their quasi-legal status, which forces them to live on the fringes of Lebanese and Jordanian society (for example, most beneficiaries live in unhygienic unheated and often unsafe housing never designed for human habitation and work illegally as construction workers, maids and street vendors where unscrupulous employers often withhold their wages through threats of deportation). In addition, the attitudes of host authorities in Jordan also hardened this year, limiting ICMC's access to government schools for the first time. As para. 19 reports in greater detail, Jordanian authorities expelled Iraqi children whose families do not possess a one-year temporary residence permit from government schools in late 2004, and are currently pressing UNHCR to refrain from renewing temporary protection ID cards, which have a validity of six months, and to limit the validity of any new cards UNHCR issues to one month.

16. (SBU) ICMC program managers are reacting to this changing operating environment, and are also modifying their EVI implementing mechanisms to compensate for two other problems affecting their targeting: the potential for old beneficiaries to dominate assistance programs and the limited local capacity of implementing partners in Jordan, where only one university offers a degree in social work. In general, ICMC/Caritas has done a solid job of overcoming these issues and has met, or is on target to meet, all but one of the three core objectives outlined in its cooperative agreements: improve living conditions, improve access to comprehensive medical care and improve access to primary education. The exception is the Jordan EVI program's outpatient medical care, which has reached only 40% of its target due to a strict vetting procedure that Caritas introduced in late 2004 that limited outpatient services to procedures costing under USD 30 per service. ICMC representatives discovered the low outpatient approval rate when it stood up Jordan EVI program's first project database five months into the program and have asked Caritas to relax its guidelines. However, they believe widespread familiarity with the earlier cutoff is still suppressing demand within the Iraqi community, and advise that they are unlikely to meet their original Jordan outpatient target by August 31.

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ACCESS, CRITERIA AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROVIDERS  
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17. (SBU) Because of their target population's irregular status, ICMC/Caritas continues to find it impossible to conduct outreach through media or other official means. Most beneficiaries are old clientele from the first two years of this program (22% in Jordan and 60% in Lebanon) or new arrivals who find the EVI program through word of mouth or informal referrals from UNHCR's community service program staff. ICMC/Caritas program staff report that new arrivals in Jordan and Lebanon are arriving with virtually no possessions, unlike the previous two years of the program. Prospective beneficiaries that refcoord observed in the Fanar District of Beirut, for example, appeared to have fled Iraq quickly after family members were the victims of kidnapping or targeted attacks in Baghdad and Mosul. However, the Jordan program has also seen an increase in "medical tourists." As in previous years, EVI program caseworkers in Lebanon and Jordan use a combination of interviews and home visits -- documented using standard assessment forms -- to determine the eligibility of clients. The majority of prospective beneficiaries walk into ICMC/Caritas program offices in Amman and Beirut but caseworkers also travel approximately one day a month to assess the eligibility of Iraqis living in other locations in Jordan and Lebanon.

18. (SBU) ICMC/Caritas staff continue to use the same nine vulnerability criteria as in previous years (i.e. mental disability/trauma, physical disability, chronic, acute or terminal medical conditions, single parent or female head of households, unaccompanied elderly or minors, elderly adults in need of specialized care, families with children or elderly in extreme poverty, female or child victims of violence and persons with special protection concerns such as ethnic minorities) but started excluding single males and limiting their aid to new beneficiaries after discovering that it had already achieved an extremely high rate of client identification amongst its old caseload in the first four months of its programming. For example, the Lebanon program had identified 60% of its 500 family target by December. To ensure it maintained a balance between its old caseload and new applicants, the Jordan EVI program established its first comprehensive database for its EVI caseload in February. In general, the majority of Lebanese cases are families in poverty or with chronic/terminal medical conditions. Jordan has seen an increase in the number of female-headed households, as they lose contact with male relatives who are spontaneously returning to Iraq. Despite a significant

increase in the number of Christian families arriving in Lebanon and Jordan, a trend also observed by UNHCR, ICMC/Caritas staff continue to do a good job targeting all religious communities. As reported by ICMC, its caseload is 59% Muslim and 41% Christian in Lebanon and 42% Muslim, 42% Christian and 16% Sabian in Jordan.

19. (SBU) Because the needs of these vulnerable communities are so great (ICMC estimates that at least 15,000 persons would fit its criteria for vulnerability in Jordan), overlap is not an issue. UNHCR's community service offices do not/not provide aid to Iraqis in temporary protection status in Lebanon. UNHCR does operate a USD 706,800 aid program for vulnerable Iraqis in temporary protection status in Jordan, working with four NGOs, including Caritas Jordan, to provide financial/in-kind aid and medical, education, and legal services, but its 2005-year caseload numbers less than 100 persons. UNHCR community service staff report that they do informally refer Iraqis to ICMC/Caritas' EVI programs. However, there is no coordination/communication between senior ICMC program managers and UNHCR management, despite the fact that UNHCR is currently considering increasing the aid it provides to Iraqis in temporary protection status. UNHCR Jordan's Acting Head of Mission readily admits that this lack of coordination is due to the fact that UNHCR was "overly focused on its border camp population," and has offered to include ICMC staff in its urban Iraqi refugee committee meetings.

#### SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

10. (SBU) JORDAN EVI PROJECT: ICMC planned to assist 3,400 individuals/families in Jordan in its third-year of EVI programming. In its first nine months of operations (September 1, 2004-May 31, 2005), ICMC/Caritas reviewed 2,684 applications, primarily from Iraqis in Amman and nearby cities. (NOTE: A small number of applicants are also residing in Irbid, Jordan's second largest city, in the north. END NOTE.). Of these, ICMC/Caritas accepted 1,962 cases, rejected 295 cases and closed 217 cases involving beneficiaries who could not be located following initial screening. One hundred seventy nine applications were pending. Jordan Caritas program managers estimate that 22% of its current caseload (1,962) also received assistance in the first two years of this program. However, ICMC country representatives caution that this figure may be suspect, given that ICMC/Caritas Jordan just established its first comprehensive EVI database for its Jordan caseload in February.

#### OBJECTIVE A - IMPROVE ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL CARE

INDICATOR 1 - OUTPATIENT MEDICAL CARE: As of June 1, ICMC/Caritas had secured outpatient medical services, including general and specialist physician consultations, vaccinations, lab exams, medicine supply, x-rays and other medical scans for 798 vulnerable Iraqis -- 40% of its original target to provide outpatient services to 2,000 persons by August 31, 2005. ICMC Representative Kelly told refcoord July 2, that he does not believe ICMC/Caritas Jordan will meet its original target due to lower than anticipated demand. As outlined in para. 5, demand may be suppressed by the fact that EVI program managers were strictly limiting outpatient services to procedures that cost USD 30 or less in the first five months of the program.

INDICATOR 2 - INPATIENT MEDICAL CARE: ICMC/Caritas provided inpatient services to 449 Iraqis at a combination of government and private hospitals by June 1, which was 90% of its target to assist 500 EVIs by August 31, 2005.

#### OBJECTIVE B - IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS

INDICATOR 1 - HUMANITARIAN AID: Using a voucher system with local shopkeepers, ICMC/Caritas provided tailored aid packages consisting of food, hygienic kits, pest control kits and equipment to support vocational training, such as sewing machines, to 739 Iraqi individuals/families by June 1, exceeding its original target to provide 500 packages by August 31, 2005.

#### OBJECTIVE C - IMPROVE ACCESS TO EDUCATION

INDICATOR 1 - PRIMARY SCHOOL ACCREDITATION: ICMC/Caritas exceeded its target to enroll 300 children in accredited primary schools by August 31. As of June 1, it had provided tuition/assisted enrollment for 319 children.

INDICATOR 2 - NON-FORMAL EDUCATION: ICMC/Caritas also exceeded its target to secure non-formal primary education for 100 children by August 31. As of June 1, it had assisted 117 children.

11. (SBU) LEBANON EVI PROJECT: ICMC estimated it would assist 500 families (approximately 2,500 individuals) in its third-year of EVI programming in Lebanon. Between September 1, 2004 and June 21, 2005 it reviewed applications from 580 families, primarily in Beirut, with a limited secondary caseload in the south. Of these, it accepted 460 families, with an average household size of 3.6 family members. The majority qualified for assistance because they had children living in extreme poverty (287 cases) or family members with chronic or terminal medical conditions (141). Twenty-four cases were pending as of June 6. ICMC/Caritas EVI program managers estimate that 60% of its current caseload received assistance in the first two years of this program, despite concerted efforts to limit assistance to new arrivals after the first four months of programming.

OBJECTIVE A -- IMPROVE ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL CARE  
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INDICATOR 1 - OUTPATIENT MEDICAL CARE: As of June 6, ICMC/Caritas had reached 93% of its target to provide outpatient care to 700 Iraqis by August 31. It had provided outpatient medical care (general and specialist physician consultations, vaccinations, lab exams, medicine supply, x-rays and other medical scans) at a combination of government and private hospitals, medical centers, labs and pharmacies to 613 individuals. Another 39 individuals had been approved for treatment.

INDICATOR 2 - INPATIENT MEDICAL CARE: As of June 6, ICMC/Caritas had achieved 73% of its target to provide inpatient care to 150 EVIs by August 31, 2005. Eighty one beneficiaries received inpatient medical care in government hospitals, with the exception of maternity care, which was provided at a private hospital in Beirut at a reduced price due to the fact that the maternity unit at ICMC's main government hospital contractor was closed for renovations. An additional 29 individuals had been approved and were awaiting treatment.

OBJECTIVE B -- IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS  
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INDICATOR 1 - HUMANITARIAN AID: ICMC/Caritas has exceeded its target to provide 250 EVIs receive tailored humanitarian packages by August 31, 2005. As of June 6 it had delivered packages to 257 families that included mattresses and blankets, food, clothes and diapers and/or had secured alternative housing for families living in dangerous conditions. An additional eight families had been approved and were awaiting delivery of services.

OBJECTIVE C -- IMPROVE ACCESS TO EDUCATION  
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INDICATOR 1 - PRIMARY SCHOOL ACCREDITATION: ICMC/Caritas has also exceeded its target to enroll 200 children in accredited primary schools by August 31, 2005. One hundred eighty-six students had received tuition/enrollment aid as of June 6 an additional 23 students had been approved and were awaiting this aid.

INDICATOR 2 - NON-FORMAL EDUCATION: ICMC/Caritas also exceeded its target to secure non-formal primary education for 150 children by August 31, 2005. One hundred sixty-nine children had been enrolled in courses, primarily to provide remedial French and English-language instruction to children to ensure they can participate in accredited schools in Lebanon that teach a compulsory curricula in a combination of French, Arabic and English, by June 6.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS  
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ICMC/Caritas also exceeded its target to provide two additional services to EVIs in Lebanon. It originally planned to provide vocational training to 50 young adults and to offer seminars on health and social issues for 60 Iraqi women. By June 6, it had provided English language and/or vocational training (data processing, accounting, nail care, cellular phone repair) to 53 individuals, and had approved training for an additional 21. ICMC/Caritas has overcome the initial delays starting up its women's seminars that it reported in its interim narrative report. Sixty-eight women had participated in EVI seminars as of June 6.

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STAFFING, WORKPLACE CONDITIONS AND INVENTORY  
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12. (SBU) MANAGEMENT: ICMC oversight has been excellent. Jim Kelly, ICMC's Lebanon country representative/overall EVI program coordinator is overseeing several projects in Lebanon, but never at the expense of this program. He briefs ICMC Geneva on EVI programming on a weekly basis and

maintains frequent and regular contact with ICMC's Jordan country representative. Both country representatives have been responsive to requests for information, and have been open to refcoord's suggestions that ICMC establish contact with UNHCR's heads of mission in Jordan and Lebanon given that UNHCR is contemplating increasing the assistance it provides to vulnerable Iraqi asylum seekers in the region. Program implementation and day-to-day management is carried out jointly by ICMC's country representative, the Director of Caritas' Lebanon Migrant Center, who has 18 years of experience with Caritas, and an EVI Project Officer, recruited jointly by ICMC/Caritas two years ago. Day-to-day program management in Jordan is carried out jointly by ICMC's country representative and an EVI program manager hired by Caritas. This manager resigned in mid-2004, and was replaced in late 2004.

13. (SBU) STAFFING: ICMC/Caritas currently have six full-time staff working on the EVI project in Lebanon (three caseworkers, one administrative assistant, one receptionist and one accountant) and eight in Jordan (seven caseworkers and one secretary). (NOTE: EVI project staff also receive regular support from interns who are pursuing social worker degrees. A graduate student also assisted Jordan's EVI project team to establish its first comprehensive database, utilizing the Lebanon EVI database as a model. END NOTE.) All appeared fully and gainfully employed during refcoord's monitoring visits. EVI project staff work six days a week in both fields. Caseworkers spend one day per week on required paperwork, and divide their remaining days interviewing potential beneficiaries in Caritas' offices and conducting follow-up visits to prospective and current beneficiaries' homes, schools and hospitals. EVI caseworkers in Lebanon are highly qualified; all hold professional social worker degrees, and are active in securing discounts from shops for their clientele. Some have personally worked to pool funding from UNHCR and local NGOs to pay for expensive operations such as open-heart surgery that ICMC program funds cannot cover. EVI caseworkers in Jordan appeared hard-working and have earned the trust of beneficiaries (an important attribute given their quasi-legal status) but they are unquestionably overstretched. During refcoord's home visits, EVI caseworkers averaged less than 10 minutes with each beneficiary, as opposed to 30 minutes in Lebanon. The tension associated with reviewing the high number of applicants and modest pay has resulted in high caseworker turnover in both fields. ICMC admits its staffing levels are inadequate; they would like to hire one additional caseworker in each of its EVI fields if PRM continues to fund its EVI programs.

14. (U) OFFICES AND EQUIPMENT: ICMC/Caritas' EVI program offices in Lebanon are located within the Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center, a clearly signposted center that Caritas established in 1994 to serve refugees and migrant workers, primarily from Africa and Asia. Office equipment provided under previous PRM agreements (desks, laser printers, switchboard) were in use and ICMC/Caritas managers readily provided an equipment inventory. In Jordan, ICMC/Caritas Jordan is continuing to rent commercial office space in downtown Amman to operate its EVI programs, which may be inadequate for its current caseload. ICMC/Caritas' receptionist, for example, shares her work space with waiting applicants, which spill out onto the adjacent stairwell. Caseworkers conduct beneficiary interviews in one single room. Signage could also be improved. PRM-funded equipment (file cabinets, phones) is in good working order.

15. (SBU) FINANCIAL CONTROLS: Caritas Lebanon and Jordan both maintain appropriate financial reporting and inventory controls. In addition to visiting hospital inpatients, caseworkers now regularly inspect the gradebooks of primary students they are assisting to counter a fraud problem the program faced in its first two years, when some school administrators were colluding with parents to share the cost of tuition without actually enrolling children.

16. (SBU) SECURITY PROTOCOL: ICMC/Caritas Jordan caseworkers continue to operate in pairs which are always comprised of a male and female caseworker. In Lebanon, security protocols appear more lax. Caseworkers often conduct home visits on their own, even in UNRWA-run refugee camps. However, no security incidents have occurred to date and caseworkers told visiting refcoord that they have never felt at risk.

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SPHERE STANDARDS AND CODES OF CONDUCT  
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17. (U) ICMC/Caritas' EVI programs in Jordan and Lebanon are addressing sub-standard housing conditions for urban Iraqi asylum seekers, but project managers are not using SPHERE standards directly to design and evaluate these programs. ICMC/Caritas' EVI program staff seemed aware of ICMC's Code of Conduct and established reporting procedures.



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PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY  
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18. (SBU) Caritas' Lebanon Migrants Center currently has the technical capacity to maintain ICMC's EVI programs: it has a strong management team and a staff of professionally-trained social workers. Caritas' Migrant Center has also developed a positive working relationship with Lebanese authorities, even securing GOL agreement to establish a Caritas office within the GOL's main Beirut detention center as a condition of Caritas' agreement to finance the renovation of that facility. That said, it is unlikely that Caritas Lebanon could sustain EVI program activities without external funding from ICMC. Likewise, it seems unlikely that Jordan Caritas would be in a position to maintain its existing EVI programming without ICMC's financial and managerial support. ICMC has found that Caritas Jordan has limited managerial capacity and difficulty recruiting staff given that only one university in Jordan currently offers a degree in social work. ICMC's Jordan Representative Paklar is providing social worker training for Caritas' caseworkers to respond to this problem and proposes building a formal local-capacity building element into its existing EVI program if PRM maintains EVI program funding in Jordan for another year.

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ISSUES AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION  
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19. (SBU) ICMC is also debating whether it should diversify its implementing partners in Jordan to address Caritas' capacity problems. In May, it registered as a local NGO to facilitate the search for a local partner that could assume control of its education activities. In addition to experiencing difficulties with its local partners, ICMC/Caritas' operations are also being affected by recent Jordanian Government initiatives. In late 2004, the Ministry of Interior required government schools to expel Iraqi children whose families do not possess an annual residency permit. (NOTE: To qualify for such a permit, an Iraqi family must deposit a minimum of JD 50,000 in a Jordanian bank in an account that cannot be accessed during their stay in Jordan. END NOTE.) On July 1, the Minister of Interior rejected a joint appeal from UNHCR, UNICEF and UNESCO to exempt children of refugees and asylum seekers from this directive, noting that such a decision would "practically accept refugees for local integration."

20. (SBU) In addition, the Jordanian Ministry of Interior is currently asking UNHCR to refrain from renewing temporary protection identification cards for Iraqis and to limit the validity of any new cards for Iraqis it issues to one month, citing the March 2001 MOU that UNHCR signed with the GOJ that requires UNHCR to seek durable solutions for refugees within six months. Political developments in Lebanon have not affected ICMC's operations to date, and are unlikely to do so. However, EVI programming in Lebanon could be temporarily disrupted in late 2005 as rising commercial rents will likely force Caritas to re-locate at the end of 2005; the manager of Caritas' Lebanon Migrant Center told refcoord June 24 that she hopes to remain close to the green line to ensure the center continues to serve all religious communities.

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RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS  
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21. (SBU) Refcoord supports continuing funding ICMC to maintain both of its EVI programs in Jordan and Lebanon, and to provide additional social worker training in Jordan to improve local capacity building. However, it would scrutinize ICMC/Caritas Lebanon's request for significant new equipment (i.e., vehicles). Based on first-hand observation of program beneficiaries, elements of the Iraqi community in Jordan and Lebanon are facing serious protection concerns, and will remain vulnerable as long as their quasi-legal status makes them vulnerable to exploitation and closes access to government services. Given that UNHCR's community services programs for Iraqis in temporary protection status are extremely limited in Jordan and non-existent in Lebanon, ICMC/Caritas is filling a critical gap in protection aid. However, UNHCR's Jordan and Iraq Heads of Mission advise that UNHCR Geneva may be contemplating increasing the aid it provides vulnerable asylum seekers under its temporary protection regime. If that occurs, refcoord recommends that UNHCR and ICMC conduct a stock-taking session to improve coordination. Once UNHCR organizes assisted returns, unused program funds should be shifted to support voluntary repatriations.

HALE